

# AIRPORT CERTIFICATION INFORMATION BUILLETIN



Eastern Region
Federal Aviation Administration
Airports Division, AEA-620
Safety & Standards Branch
1 Aviation Plaza,
Jamaica NY 11434

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Bulletin: 2011-03

Subject: Best Practices for Winter Operations

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**Prepared by:** Evelyn Martinez

**Phone**: 718-553-3348

Contact: Please contact your assigned Airport Certification Safety Inspector with further

questions.

**Application:** This bulletin is being sent to Part 139 Airport Certificate holders to communicate the FAA's best practices for winter operations. Please note a Snow and Ice Control Plan Review Checklist will be forthcoming.

**Action Required:** Please distribute to all staff as necessary.

## **Best Practices:**

### Maintain Situational Awareness

- Educate/Train for low visibility and white out conditions to include special provisions to cease snow removal operations when visibility impairs a driver's ability to safely navigate.
- Set standards for how long a driver can operate on the airfield to minimize fatigue.
- Minimize distractions such as non-essential telephones or radios during snow removal operations. Recommend, if personnel is available, to add a person to each vehicle to handle communications.

• Ensure airfield guidance signs and mandatory hold signs are clearly visible and operational. If snow or ice can not be promptly removed, ensure appropriate NOTAMs are in place to identify obscured and or missing signs.

## Vehicle Lighting & Visibility

• Vehicles should use adequate/appropriate lighting to ensure they are visible.

#### Communications

- Communicate intentions; read back clearances; call clear as required.
- Use Proper Aviation Phraseology.
- At Controlled Airfields, periodically check in with ATC to reconfirm ATC clearances.
- **At Uncontrolled Airfields**, vehicle operators should continually self-announce positions and intentions.

## **Operational Safety**

- It is encouraged to close runways for snow removal operations via NOTAM when personnel and equipment will occupy the runway for an extended period of time.
- Provide timely and accurate Airfield Condition Reporting.
- Issue NOTAMs as appropriate.
- Communicate airfield conditions with ATCT and users.
- Update any change of conditions with particular emphasis on rapidly changing conditions.
- Institute continuous monitoring procedures when required.
- 14 CFR Part 139 Airport Operators must initiate runway closures when the following circumstances occur:
  - 1. A NIL pilot braking action report (PIREP), or NIL braking action assessment by the airport operator requires the runway to be closed before the next flight operation. The runway must remain closed until the airport operator is satisfied that the NIL condition no longer exists.
  - 2. When previous PIREPs have indicated GOOD or MEDIUM (FAIR) braking action, two consecutive POOR PIREPs should be taken as evidence that

surface conditions may be deteriorating and require the airport operator to conduct a runway assessment. If the airport operator has not already instituted its continuous monitoring procedures, this assessment must occur before the next operation. If the airport operator is already continuously monitoring runway conditions, this assessment must occur as soon as traffic volume allows, in accordance with the airports Snow and Ice Control Plan (SICP).

- While not always obtainable, the goal should be to maintain all operational surfaces to no worse than wet conditions.
- Conduct Annual review of SICP including verification of snow equipment list.
- Personnel, who only operate on the movement area during seasonal times of the year, should receive recurrent training just prior to that seasonal period.

#### **Attachments:**

- Sample Winter Ops LOA